



ask SHIP

Q: I've been told that Medicare beneficiaries will be getting new Medicare cards? Is this true? How and when will I get mine?

A: It is true! The biggest reason the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services are supplying new cards is to remove your Social Security number from your card to keep you safe from medical identity theft.

Mailing these new cards will take several months to complete. CMS will begin mailing new cards in April, 2018 (after June for most Indiana residents). Your card might arrive at a different time than your friend's or neighbor's.

Everyone who had Medicare before April, 2018 will get a new card with instructions in the mail. If you retired from a railroad, the Railroad Retirement Board will mail you your new card.

People new to Medicare in April, 2018 or later will get the new card when they are enrolled.

Visit www.Medicare.gov/NewCard and sign up for email updates, or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/medicare.

Important things to remember:

- Only your Medicare card and number are changing
- Your Medicare benefits stay the same.
- Your Social Security Number stays the same.
- Any enrollments in Medicare Advantage, Part D prescription plans, and Medigap (Supplemental) policies don't change—keep those plan cards.

You should start using your new card as soon as you get it. Beginning January 1, 2020, you can only use the new Medicare card and new number.

If you belong to a Medicare health plan (like an HMO), or a Medicare drug plan, you will still get a new Medicare card. Be sure to destroy your old red, white, and blue Medicare card, but DON'T

destroy your plan's card.

You should continue to use your health or drug plan's card when you get health care or fill a prescription.

It is always important to protect yourself and Medicare from fraud. You can do this by not sharing your Medicare card with anyone. Treat it like a credit card. Don't carry it unless you need it. Keep it in a safe place.

Scam artists may try to get personal information by contacting you about your new card. If someone asks you for your information, for money, or threatens to cancel your health benefits if you don't share your personal information, hang up.

If you suspect Medicare fraud, contact Indiana's SMP at (317) 205-9201. Or contact SHIP.

If you have questions about Medicare or your new Medicare cards, call SHIP at 1-800-452-4800, 1-866-846-0139 TDD or online at www.medicare.in.gov.